

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GEORGE 01595 181607Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 MCT-01 HA-05 IO-13 AID-05 /076 W
-----019169 181611Z /43

O R 181500Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6818
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, GY
SUBJECT: POLITICAL VOILENCE IN GEORGETOWN

1. LATE AFTERNOON OF MAY 17, THE COALITION OPPOSED TO THE
GOG'S PROPOSED REFERENDUM TO CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION
ORGANIZED A POLITICAL RALLY AT BOURDA MARKET, LOCATED NEAR
THE CENTER OF THE CAPITAL. SPEAKERS WERE LONG-TIME OPPOSITION
LEADER, DR. CHEDDI JAGAN, HEAD OF THE PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE
PARTY (PPP), EUSI KWAYANA, WORKING PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE,
LLEWELYN JOHN, PEOPLE'S DEMORCATIC MOVEMENT, AND A FATHER
DE CARIES OF THE CATHOLIC STANDARD. ACCORDING TO EYE WIT-
NESSES TWO OR THREE CARLOADS OF UNIDENTIFIED YOUTHS DROVE UP
SHORTLY AFTER THE SETING BEGAN. THEY GOT OUT OF THEIR CARS
AND, ARMED WITH WHAT WERE DESCRIBED AS "SHINY, NEW CLUBS,"
THEY MARCHED DIRECTLY TO THE PLATFORM FROM WHICH THE
SPEAKERS WERE ADDRESSING THE CROWD. THEY METHODICALLY
CUT THE WIRES TO THE LOUDSPEAKERS AND SMASHED THE
SPEAKERS, AND THEN PROCEEDED TO CLUB SEPAKERS JOHN AND
DE CARIES. DECARIES WAS KNOCKED DOWN. ACCORDING TO OBSERVERS
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ON THE SCENE, ONE OF THE YOUTHS
MENACED JAGAN WITH A KNIFE, BUT WAS RESTRAINED AND
DISARMED BY PPP DEMONSTRATORS. THE ASSAILANTS THEN
MOVED BACK TO THEIR CARS AND LEFT THE SCENE.

2. THE POLICE ARRIVED AT THE RALLY EITHER JUST BEFORE
OR JUST AFTER THE ATTACKERS DEPARTED--EYEWITNESSES

ACCOUNTS DIFFER ON THIS POINT. IN ANY EVENT, NO
ARRESTS WERE MADE AND THE MEETING WAS TERMINATED AT
THIS POINT.

3. COMMENT: AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED,SRUMORS ARE RIFE AS
TO THE IDENTITY OF THE YOUTHS WHO BROKE UP THE RALLY.
POLITICAL OPPOSENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE CONVINCED THAT
THEY WERE MEMBERS OF THE YOUTH ARM OF THE RULING
PEOPLE'S NATIONALIST CONGRESS, OR SOME OF THE YOUTHFUL
THUGS WHOM MINISTER HEALTH, HOUSING AND LABOR HAMILTON
GREEN IS REPUTED TO HAVE ON HIS PAYROLL. IT IS UNLIKELY
THAT THEIR IDENTITY WILL BE ESTABLISHED GIVEN THE FACT
THAT NONE OF THEM WAS ARRESTED.
BURKE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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